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Urban Areas Have Land Conservation Problems, Too

Tremendous expansion of urban metropolitan areas all over the United States has reached the point where community leaders and conservationists are insisting some serious thinking be started about where we are going.

There must be systematic, scientific planning to utilize available land around cities in the best possible way, they are saying.

Floods in New England and Northern California the past few years have led many to take a hard, second look at some of the housing developments of the postwar boom. Many flooded areas resulted from improper planning, improper conservation methods. Residential areas in narrow draws subject to abnormal stream flow, on hills and in canyons subject to dirt slides in sudden heavy rains, or along rivers without adequate flood control—all these are examples of bad planning.

Insufficient Park Space

In addition, cities are being ringed by housing developments with inadequate recreational facilities. In many cases, people are forced to go back into the middle of the city to find parks. In the New York City metropolitan area, for instance, out of 150 golf courses a decade ago, 50 have been swallowed up by new residential areas. Three states—California, North Carolina, and Vermont—have set up recreational commissions to help communities with their park problem. Wisconsin has a State Planning Division to coordinate rural and urban planning efforts. Some states help communities hold back from immediate development large areas for future parks on the outskirts of cities.

Zoning

Montanans also should start giving more attention to optimum uses of land around cities. A good way to approach conservation of land is through zoning. With adequate zoning, residential areas are located on sites for which they are suited. Factories and warehouses are located near transportation, on level ground, with adequate room for expansion. Retail stores are concentrated and located in proper relation to residential areas—not spread throughout residential areas with consequent lowering of property values.

Intelligent use of land in urbanized areas is a national concern. We in Montana are fortunate that our cities are not now so large as to make problems insoluble. But we do have problems, and they will multiply in the next few years.

Flathead Group Promotes Growth

Evidence that Montana communities can forget their rivalries and cooperate in promoting economic development on a regional basis is found in the Flathead country.

There, representatives of Kalispell, Whitefish, and Columbia Falls, three of the most active cities in Montana, have gotten together to form Flathead Development Committee, Inc. And not only is the whole Flathead Valley represented, but so are all economic groups: labor, retail business, manufacturing management, and professional.

G. M. Moss, former editor of the WHITEFISH PILOT, is Chairman, and Clark Mason, Manager of the Kalispell Chamber of Commerce, is Secretary. Formed in April, 1955, the group acts as a clearing house for promotional efforts affecting all three communities. A major project was sponsorship of an advertisement in the recent Montana issue of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY magazine. Using the theme "Come grow with us," the ad points out that the valley has a potential hydroelectric power equal to one-tenth the present total U. S. capacity, and a yearly sustained timber

yield of 150 million board feet with 400 million board feet potential.

However, the people of the Valley are not smug about their situation. Employment in lumber and timber products has dropped drastically in past months, due mainly to adjustment in residential construction. Responsible people are concerned about this decline.

Further diversification in the wood products industry would seem to be a solution. Already the area is manufacturing boxes and prefab fences. Several Whitefish lumbermen are promoting a plywood operation. Other expanding wood industries for which Flathead County has potential include paper pulp, hardboard, wallboard, and particle board.

No cities are more competitive than Columbia Falls, Whitefish, and Kalispell. Yet forward-looking citizens realize that the growth of each community depends to a large degree on the growth of the whole region. They realize that in certain respects cooperation is the best form of competition.



Lumbering and wood products industries account for about one-third of all non-agricultural employment in Flathead County, but the maximum development possible is barely more than begun. Wood, water, power, and people are the principal resources of the area and continued technological progress, as typified by mechanical loading of saw logs in the photograph above, is helping to put them to work.

Industries Needed to Balance Farm Economy

Planning Board Starts Building Survey

In these days of tight money supply and close control of depreciation allowances under federal income tax regulations, the availability of buildings suitable for manufacturing purposes on lease or rental basis can be a special inducement for business location. This is especially true for business having freedom of location. Even availability for sale at original construction cost on a long-term contract can be meaningful in some cases.

The State Planning Board is preparing a listing of such buildings for the use of both Montanans and out-of-state parties who are considering the establishment of business in the state.

A special form is being prepared to secure building descriptions containing the most essential information on a somewhat uniform basis. Most important information required to make a building listing of maximum usefulness include:

1. Owner's name and address.
2. Type of construction.
3. Accessibility to transportation facilities (both truck and rail).
4. Installation or convenience of utilities (water, sewers, fuel, power).
5. Inside dimensions.
6. Inside obstructions (pillars, beams, walls, etc.).
7. Purpose for which building was built.
8. Dimensions of building site, and availability of room for expansion.
9. Photographs from various angles.

These forms will be sent to all local Chambers of Commerce with a request that they be completed. Others may secure forms upon request.

IDEAS NEEDED

Some inquiries have been received recently by the State Planning Board which seek investment-management opportunities in fields with growth potential. Inquiries are for endeavors requiring both small and large investments, and they originate from parties with development and management experience.

To help in answering such inquiries, ideas from individuals and community groups in Montana are invited. All that is needed is a description of the idea, an evaluation of the potential, sources of information, and a point of contact for further consultation. Send IDEAS to the State Planning Board so that they may be passed on to possible developers. Suggestions will be kept on a confidential basis when requested.

The Non-Farm Economy

Reprinted by permission from *MONTANA AGRICULTURE: BASIC FACTS* (Bozeman: Montana State College, Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension Service, Bulletin 293, October 1956, \$1.00).

What happens to the non-farm part of the Montana economy is very important to farm people. It is true that Montana farmers do not depend upon the rest of Montana for markets for much of such commodities as wheat, sugar beets, beef, and wool. They do depend upon local markets for such commodities as dairy and poultry products and fruits and vegetables. But the non-farm part of the economy affects Montana farmers in other ways.

For example, suppose cities such as Billings and Great Falls continue to grow. They will develop a "pulling" force which attracts new industries and businesses and more people. In the metropolitan areas food processing plants come in which may furnish improved market outlets for livestock and livestock products, vegetables, fruits, and so on.

Moreover, if non-farm enterprises flourish there will be opportunities in Montana for more farm boys who cannot find a place on the farm. In recent years we have been exporting many young people who are being raised and educated in the state but who are contributing their talent and skills to other regions.

Our population has experienced considerable growth in the past few years but the greatest increases have been in the very young group (under 17) and in the age group of 65 years and older. We have barely held our own, or have possibly had some decrease since 1950, in the 18 to 64 group.

Few residents would like to see Montana become a heavily populated industrial state. But many would welcome some growth in the non-farm sector. This would give more opportunities for some of our best young people, would add some diversification to the economy, and would help in the support of public services required in the third largest state of the union. There is no sense in talking of a million or more people in Montana without discussing an economy that will support them. What are the prospects?

Non-agricultural employment of wage and salary workers has increased by 50 percent since 1939. The bulk of this increase has come since 1945.

Average monthly non-agricultural employment was 154,600 in 1955 as compared with 101,800 in 1939. Total employment, including the self-employed or "proprietor group" shows opposite movement for agricultural and non-agricultural groups.

Agriculture, including operators, furnishes about 25 percent of total employment (about 60,500 in 1950). Total non-agricultural employment (including the self-employed) was estimated at 175,100 in 1950. Increases in non-agricultural employment are more than offsetting decreases in agricultural employment.

Remarks by Governor J. Hugo Aronson at State Agricultural Stabilization Committee Conference at Great Falls, March 19, 1957:

As Montanans associated with the ASC program, you know how important agriculture is to our Treasure State.

However, we must also realize that industry is becoming more and more important, as well.

As persons interested in agriculture and in the development of Montana, and I am both a farmer and rancher, too, we must look for an even greater potential in Montana agriculture. This means looking for new uses for our agricultural products, new means of becoming more efficient on our farms and ranches.

We must not be content with merely accepting the normal increase in consumption of agricultural products, due to increasing population. This means more research, more and better advertising of our products, and education of the public to use them. All this is in keeping with our free enterprise economy, of which agriculture has always been an integral part. This is important for us to remember as it is only because of free enterprise that we are free to grow in this great land of ours.

Looking forward, we must not be selfish and ignore the other side of Montana's development, namely, industry. I feel like most of you that a quick burst of industry might change Montana into something which we don't want. We like the true western spirit that prevails here. But we can't live in the Stone Age either. We must look ahead toward an ever-increasing industrial portion of our economy. What I have always worked for, as a councilman, state representative, state senator, and governor, is a balance between our agriculture and industrial economies that will enable Montana to truly flower and realize its fullest potential, without crowding out those of us who like the wide, open spaces and the fresh air.

This is a problem that will take the best efforts of all of us to solve, but it can be done. The State Planning Board, which was reactivated during my first term as governor, is working full-time toward such a goal and needs the fullest cooperation and interest of all Montanans.

Officials of Lolo National Forest have announced proposed sales of nearly 180 million board feet of timber, largest in the past three years. Further information about date and place of sale from Supervisor, Lolo National Forest, Missoula.

Anaconda Company announced February 28 plans to develop a copper deposit near Whitlash in Liberty County. Bulldozers will be used to remove overburden of slide-rock to expose bedrock and possible ore bodies. Already a center of oil production, the Whitlash area may well become boom country again.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION MEANS WISE USAGE

Excerpt from a talk by E. L. Peterson, Assistant Secretary of U. S. Department of Agriculture, before Association of State Foresters, October 5, 1956 (as quoted in "Northern Region News," newsletter of Region One, U. S. Forest Service, December 28, 1956):

What is conservation? Forest conservation is synonymous with forest-land conservation. It means conservation of all renewable resources on forest land. To me there is one thing it doesn't mean: no use. Our great natural heritage has no meaning and significance except as it is used to provide the materials and services which as a people we must have to enlarge and enrich our living. In a very real sense, our very lives depend on our basic natural resources. **Resources unused are sterile—of little value.** Conservation of renewable resources must mean wise use—intelligent use—use in a manner which will preserve and intensify the capacity of the basic resource to keep on furnishing the materials and services we need and want without eating into the capital itself.

EXPERT PREDICTS 1957 ANOTHER GOOD YEAR FOR MONTANA

Predictions of another record year for the state's economy in 1957 have been made by the Bureau of Business and Economic Research at Montana State University.

In an article in the February 1957 MONTANA BUSINESS, Professor Edward Chambers, Associate Director of the Bureau, points out that during 1956:

Comprehensive Planning Bill Signed Into Law

House Bill 413, the urban planning legislation, was signed into law by Gov. Aronson March 13. Montana cities and counties now can form joint planning boards to deal with civic problems which cut across city boundaries. Should they form joint planning boards, the state's three largest communities—Great Falls, Butte and Billings—now will be eligible to apply for Urban Planning Assistance grants, by which the federal government will pay up to half the costs involved in a planning program.

House Bill 421 (discussed in February INDUSTRIAL HORIZONS), regarding development credit corporations, was killed in Senate committee. A more adequate foundation will have to be laid if such a bill is to be passed in 1959.

Total non-agricultural employment was up more than two per cent over 1955.

Value of building permits reached \$36.9 million, an increase of three per cent over 1955.

Mineral production established a post-war record (nearly \$202 million, including petroleum).

Pace of petroleum exploration and crude oil production was quickened, reaching an average of 68,598 barrels per day in December.

Tourist industry enjoyed an excellent season.

For 1957 Professor Chambers sees continued prosperity:

Construction will again reach high levels, in part because of several large expansions in power facilities.

Assuming national industrial production holds, mining should again surpass records.

Increased activity in petroleum industry.

Lumbering Uncertain

However, Chambers adds, predictions for one important element of the economy are not so bright: "The prospects for Western Montana's second-ranking non-agricultural industry—lumber—are uncertain. Residential credit conditions are not likely to be eased significantly, and it now seems likely that housing starts in 1957 will be slightly less than in 1956. One of the more promising developments is the trend toward diversification now appearing. The construction of new pulp mills gives promise of more stability for the industry."

Dependent on National Level

Ending on an optimistic note, Chambers points out that mining, agriculture, and lumbering—Montana's most important sources of income—are tied to national business conditions. "Given a high level of national business activity, the outlook for Montana personal income in 1957 is good."

New Group to Promote Canadian Trade

Montana and Alberta business leaders, in a Great Falls meeting March 4, created the nucleus of an Alberta-Montana Trade Association. First purpose of the new organization will be to list Canadian products in which Montana manufacturers or consumers may be interested, and Montana products that may be marketable in Alberta.

The meeting was called jointly by Provincial Association of Chambers of Commerce and Montana Chamber of Commerce. Cash prizes to college students for best theses on trade development was one project discussed.

Trade with Canada is assuming an increasing importance in the economy of the Northwest. Montana will benefit.



Farmers Union Central Exchange, Inc., has announced a \$3 million improvement at their oil refinery south of Laurel. New processes to be added are a 4,500-barrel-a-day platform reformer and a 7,000-barrel-a-day unifier. Function of a platformer is to increase the anti-knock value of low octane straight-run gasoline and naphtha. Hydrogen is also produced, and this is to be used in the unifier, which improves the quality of intermediate fuels, such as diesel and burner fuels. Work is to start immediately and will be completed early next year.

The refinery is a major employer in the Laurel area. Capacity is 19,000 barrels of petroleum products per day. Three-fourths of the crude refined by the refinery comes from Wyoming fields. Nearly a fourth is produced in the Sumatra field of Rosebud and Musselshell counties.

Industry to Be Found In Your Own Back Yard

During past months Montana communities have been giving a lot of attention to organizing community development groups, preparing economic surveys, and the like—all with the objective of attracting industry by providing responsible contacts and factual information for prospects.

Most of these efforts properly have been based on the assumption that the most feasible development potentials in Montana are associated with the production or processing of natural resources. As a result, most programs to date have been concerned chiefly with attracting large-scale industries having huge pay-rolls, those of at least regional (if not national) significance because of the size of investment involved.

However, it's a truism that despite all the complexities of location economies, most new income and employment opportunities come into being by expansion of local industry from ideas developed and proved sound within the community. In other words, "most industries are located where they are because that's where they started." Some experts estimate as high as 85 per cent of all manufacturing activities have no other explanation for their current location than "this is where our founder lived." Examples to substantiate the point are numerous in Montana, too.

Thus this question merits discussion: Are present development programs geared to providing factual information and organizing welcoming committees for the "big boys" of industry (which too frequently do not appear), with insufficient attention being given to the more numerous and frequently more realistic potentials that can be achieved by local imagination and initiative?

For a great many communities, the answer is certainly yes, particularly in those smaller towns and cities of the state not blessed by a valuable natural resource necessary to a growing industry; where population is declining, or it is growing at a rate insufficient to provide an initial stimulus for economic advancement.

So for Montana communities, especially small ones, recognition of the concept of business location "because that's where it started" is important.

Investigate Local Opportunities

Community groups thus are urged to look not only at potentials for the natural

resources in their area, or at products to serve their immediate retail marketing area. They should also investigate the resources of Montana as a whole, and state, regional, and national marketing opportunities. They should work to disclose and evaluate potentials in this changing world of which we are all a part—changing consumption habits and patterns of the region and the nation.

Perhaps some examples will contribute to a better understanding of what is being suggested here. Years since World War II have seen small pumice, cinder, and concrete block plants spring up all around the nation—to serve relatively small and limited market areas. Pre-built houses are being constructed in numerous small communities throughout the nation, at points too distant from lumber and other building supplies to enjoy the presumed advantages of location near raw material sources.

And to get nearer to home, the nationwide trend to outdoor living is partially responsible for a small plant in Western Montana which makes a variety of wooden fences, selling its entire output to distant markets as far away as New York City. High-quality paint is being made, principally for distribution within the state. A plant to construct laminated beams and rafters for the state's construction industry has been started by local men with local capital some 325 miles from its principal source of high-grade finished lumber.

Local Initiative Necessary

Any or all of these industries, as well as many others known and unknown, could have been located in practically any town in the state had there been the necessary imagination, follow-through, and organizational ability.

Every community has individuals and groups with these qualities. Thus, if efforts are directed toward encouraging business endeavors having freedom of choice in location, plus a present or potential demand for their products, there is much reason to expect rewarding results.

Interesting Publications . . .

Koehler S. Stout, **Operating Ideas for Small Mines** (Butte: Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology, Montana School of Mines, 1956; 81; 81pp). Author, a mine-operator and professor of mining engineering, presents many helpful hints for cutting costs in small mines, which are important to Montana's economy.

Harold V. Miller, **Mr. Planning Commissioner** (Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1313 East 60 Street, 1954; 81; 81pp). Guide to setting up a local planning board. Written in layman's terms by the country's leading planning administrator, head of planning program in Tennessee. Recommended reading for all local planning board members.

Raymond H. McEvoy, **Bank Financing of Montana Business** (Missoula: Bureau of Business and Economic Research, Montana State University; 1957; Regional Study No. 7; 10pp). Prof. McEvoy spent last summer with the Federal Reserve Bank in Minneapolis; this study is a result. Bank loans in Montana reflect the economic structure; a larger share of loans in Montana than in the U. S. as a whole are made to retail trade and service firms, while a smaller percentage go for manufacturing and mining. A highly interesting study.

BRIEFS

Montanans interested in wise use of our natural resources should plan to attend the annual meeting of Montana Conservation Council in Kalispell, May 3-4. Theme is "Montana's Water Resources—Problems and Uses," a subject of vital importance to industrial development. Further information available from George Gloege, Executive Secretary, Eastern Montana College of Education in Billings.

C. W. Brinck, State Director of Environmental Sanitation, reports applications are still being taken for grants-in-aid for sewage treatment plants. Under Public Law 660, U. S. Public Health Service will pay up to 30 per cent of the costs in planning, designing, engineering, constructing, or remodeling such facilities. Montana's share of the \$50 million appropriated for the program is \$503,650, which must be committed before July 1, 1957. No funds will be carried over into fiscal 1958, so it is to each community's advantage to apply at once. Inquiries should be directed to State Board of Health, Helena.

MONTANA STATE PLANNING BOARD

Sam Mitchell Building

Helena, Montana

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